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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

FOR SEC/AD HARRY MANCHESTER

E.O. 12958

TAGS: [NONE](#)

SUBJECT: USAID/SRI LANKA SECURITY PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR FY 05 AND FY 06.

ENTIRE TEXT IS SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

REF: SECSTATE 58307 OF 3/16/04

THIS CABLE HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE USAID DIRECTOR AND CLEARED BY THE RSO AND IMO.

#### [1A. OVERVIEW](#)

1) THE USAID MISSION IN SRI LANKA HAS BEEN LOCATED ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF A USG-OWNED BUILDING, THE AMERICAN CENTER, AT #44 GALLE ROAD IN COLOMBO, SRI LANKA SINCE JANUARY 1999. USAID, THEN IN A PHASE DOWN MODE, MOVED IN FOLLOWING SECURITY ENHANCEMENT CONSTRUCTION. THE EXTERIOR FAADE AND OTHER PARTS OF THE BUILDING CANNOT BE CHANGED BECAUSE OF ITS HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE. THE INTERIOR WALLS OF THE BUILDING HAVE BEEN RECONSTRUCTED TO PROVIDE 15 MINUTE PROTECTION. AT PRESENT, THE BUILDING PROVIDES A MODERATE LEVEL OF SAFETY AND SECURITY REQUIRED FOR THE THREAT LEVEL IN COLOMBO, SRI LANKA. THE OCTOBER 2003 OIG INSPECTION OF THE AMERICAN CENTER POINTED OUT A NUMBER OF PHYSICAL SECURITY RECOMMENDATIONS, SUBJECT TO OBO FUNDS AVAILABILITY.

2) FOLLOWING PEACE INITIATIVES IN 2002, USAID WROTE A NEW STRATEGY WHICH WAS APPROVED IN THE FALL OF 2003. THE SIZE OF BOTH THE PROGRAM AND THE STAFF WILL GROW. THERE ARE CURRENTLY 39 APPROVED POSITIONS, 8 US (3 DH and 5 USPSC, AND 31 FSN. AT THIS TIME, 28 OF THE POSITIONS ARE ENCUMBERED. THE STAFF IS SQUEEZED INTO THE FULL FIRST FLOOR OF THE AMERICAN CENTER.

3) WE RECENTLY REPORTED THAT, EVEN AFTER THE FALL 2003 RECONFIGURATION OF SPACE, THE OFFICE REMAINS WOEFULLY INADEQUATE TO MEET OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS. FOLLOWING THE APPROVAL OF THE PROGRAM STRATEGY LAST OCTOBER, USAID SOUGHT APPROVAL TO SEEK COMMERCIAL OFFICES IN THE CITY. THIS REQUEST WAS DENIED BY IG/SEC WHO ADVISED US TO REMAIN HERE AND CONSIDER USING TRAILERS.

4) WE RULED OUT TRAILERS BECAUSE OF COSTS. ALTERNATIVELY, WE PREFER TO CONSTRUCT A ONE OR TWO STOREY ANNEX HERE, IN THE REAR OF THE AMERICAN CENTER. WE REQUEST APPROVAL FROM OMS, OBO AND IG/SEC TO ENGAGE IN PRELIMINARY SURVEYS - INCLUDING COSTING - OF THE OPTIONS. THE ONE STOREY OPTION CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED FOR UNDER \$100,000. HOWEVER, DURING A RECENT TDY, DELHI EXO DENISE HERBOL, MADE A CONVINCING CASE FOR US TO OPT FOR A TWO STOREY ANNEX. THIS DISCUSSION WAS INCLUDED BECAUSE IF SUCH AN EXPANSION IS APPROVED, WE WILL NEED TO GET IG/SEC AND OMS GUIDANCE ON HOW BEST TO FUND AND "HARDEN" THE PROPOSED ANNEX WITH SECURITY DOORS/WINDOWS.

#### [1B. PHYSICAL SECURITY IN SRI LANKA](#)

1) THE STREET AND RESIDENTIAL CRIME THREAT HERE IS CURRENTLY RATED AS HIGH. THAT SAID, FOR EXPATRIATES, CRIME AND VIOLENCE IS NOT A SERIOUS PROBLEM IN MOST AREAS OF THE CITY DURING THE DAYLIGHT HOURS. EXPATRIATES ARE NOT SINGLED OUT OVER SRI LANKANS AS TARGETS FOR STREET CRIME BUT THEY DO REMAIN TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY REQUIRING THEM TO PRACTICE SOUND PERSONAL AND RESIDENTIAL SECURITY PRACTICES. ALTHOUGH THE CEASE-FIRE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA AND LTTE CONTINUES TO HOLD, TRAVELERS ARE ADVISED TO EXERCISE CAUTION WHEN WORKING IN AND NEAR GOVERNMENT FACILITIES AND TO AVOID LARGE GATHERINGS WHICH COULD BECOME VIOLENT. ALTHOUGH THE CEASE FIRE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA AND THE LTTE HAS HELD FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS AND THERE HAVE NOT BEEN ANY TERRORIST ATTACKS, TRAVELERS AND STAFF ARE ADVISED TO BE WATCHFUL OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS BECAUSE OF THE OUTSIDE POTENTIAL FOR A TERRORIST INCIDENT.

2) PETTY CRIME IS COMMON IN COLOMBO AND TRAVELERS ARE URGED TO AVOID USING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER THAN RADIO OR HOTEL TAXIS. TRAVELERS ARE TOLD TO KEEP MONEY OR JEWELRY, WHEN NOT IN IMMEDIATE USE, IN HOTEL SAFE DEPOSIT BOXES. RECENT CASES OF CREDIT CARD FRAUD HAVE BEEN REPORTED. TRAVELERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO EITHER PAY WITH CASH OR TO WATCH WHEN A MERCHANT 'SWIPES' THE CARD FOR A TRANSACTION TO ENSURE IT

IS NOT SWIPED MORE THAN ONCE.

**C. ARMORED VEHICLES**

1) THERE ARE NO ARMORED VEHICLES IN THE USAID FLEET AND WE ARE NOT PLANNING TO CHANGE THIS IN FY-05 AND FY-06.

**D. USAID COMMUNICATIONS**

1) ALL U.S. STAFF HAVE BEEN ISSUED MOTOROLA HANDHELD RADIOS PROVIDED TO US BY THE EMBASSY/IMO. WE WILL NEED TO PURCHASE THREE MORE IN FY-05 AND TWO IN FY-06, TO BE SURE THAT ALL U.S. STAFF AT THE POST PARTICIPATE IN THE EMBASSY'S E&E NETWORK. ALSO, WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR TECHNICAL ADVICE ON PURCHASING RADIOS FOR VEHICLES ON LONG DISTANCE FIELD TRAVEL TO INCLUDE POSSIBLE MOBILE HF RADIOS.

**E. SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS**

1) BASED UPON PROJECTED NEEDS AND TURNOVER OF LONG TERM US PSCS, WE ANTICIPATE REQUESTING NO MORE THAN TWO SUCH SECURITY CHECKS PER YEAR IN FY-05 AND FY-06. WE WILL ALSO REQUIRE AN ESTIMATED NINE (9) LOCAL SECURITY CHECKS/INVESTIGATIONS FOR FSN NEW HIRES IN FY-04 AND FY-05 AND SIX(6) FSN RECERTIFICATION INVESTIGATIONS IN FY-05/06.

**F. RESIDENTIAL SECURITY**

1) FULL SECURITY UPGRADES FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSES IN SRI LANKA COSTS AN ESTIMATED \$4,000 TO \$5,000 PER UNIT, AND INCLUDES DOORS, LOCKS, WINDOW GRILLES, WINDOW FILM AND ALARMS.

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